

# SB2975

Relating to Early Learning  
EDU, WAM



EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING  
HONOLULU

GG WEISENFELD  
DIRECTOR

Testimony in **Support** of  
S.B. 2975, Relating to Early Learning  
By GG Weisenfeld, Director

Senate Committee on Education  
January 29, 2014  
1:30 p.m., Room 414

Chair Tokuda, Vice-Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon. I am GG Weisenfeld, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning. EOEL is in support of Senate Bill 2975.

The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds for the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) to enter into contracts with third party providers for family-child interaction learning programs.

EOEL requests that \$1 million be appropriated for this purpose, to be used in FY2015 for the 2014-2015 school year. This will provide approximately an additional 400 four-year-old children with access to a prekindergarten program.

Family-child interaction learning programs are an important part of the early learning system that EOEL is charged with developing pursuant to Act 178, Session Laws of Hawaii 2012.

To understand where we are today and where we want to go in 2014, it is important to know the following:

This November, there will be a question on the ballot that will ask voters whether public funds can be used to fund private, community-based preschools. If voters approve, the State will be allowed to fund quality preschool experiences at private, community-based preschools such as those operated by KCAA Preschools of Hawaii, Kama'aina Kids, and Seagull Schools. While we await the outcome of the vote, the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) is requesting additional resources to increase the number of four-year-olds who will be able to access preschool in August 2014.

There will be an increased number of four-year-olds – about 5,100 – who need a preschool experience but are too young to go to kindergarten due to the change in kindergarten entry age that takes effect the 2014-2015 school year.

Last year, the Legislature funded the Preschool Open Doors program (\$6 million to the Department of Human Services), which covers 1,200 of the 5,100 children at private, community-based preschools. However, with over 17,000 four-year-olds in Hawaii, many more families want access to quality preschools.

The Hawaii Department of Education has identified 32 classrooms at 30 public schools that can operate a prekindergarten program. Some of these schools already have prekindergarten programs using funding sources that will be ending. The supplemental budget request for \$4.5 million will be able to support access to prekindergarten experiences for 640 free- and reduced-price meal eligible children.

The supplemental budget request also asks for \$1 million for EOEL to contract with family-child interaction learning programs (where a parent attends with their child) to increase the number of four-year-olds – about 400 – who will benefit from this learning opportunity.

The purpose of all of these programs is to increase the number of four-year-olds (1040) who will have the opportunity for a prekindergarten experience.

More than five organizations provide family-child interaction learning programs -- such as INPEACE's Keiki Steps and Partners in Development Foundation's Tutu & Me programs -- at sites across the state. These organizations reach several thousand children.

This bill appropriates funds to contract with FCIL providers, which is an important part of the effort to reach more four-year-olds in the 2014-2015 school year.

EOEL respectfully asks that the committee move this bill forward. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR



KATHRYN S. MATAYOSHI  
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 01/29/2014

**Committee:** Senate Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** SB 2975 RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING.

**Purpose of Bill:** Makes an appropriation for the executive office on early learning to enter into contracts with third party providers for family child interaction learning programs.

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education (Department) supports SB 2975. The Department recognizes the importance of establishing a quality early learning system to support all children in their journey towards a college- and career-ready future in Hawaii.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

January 29, 2014

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Director

SUBJECT: **S.B. 2975 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING**

Hearing: Wednesday, January 29, 2014; 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 414, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B. 2975 is to appropriate funds for the Executive Office on Early Learning to enter into contracts with third party providers for family child interaction learning programs as part of a mixed-delivery early learning system to ensure school readiness of Hawaii's children prior to entering kindergarten.

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this bill.

Act 169, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, established the existing child care assistance program, called Preschool Open Doors, as the statewide school readiness program and that the program will be administered by the Department of Human Services.

The Preschool Open Doors (POD) program will serve low- to moderate-income families whose late-born children are affected by the change in kindergarten entry age

in the 2014-2015 school year or whose children will be eligible for kindergarten in the following school year.

However, there are communities throughout the State which do not have preschools available to which families could send their children, even if the families are eligible for the POD program. Those families who choose family child interaction learning programs are not eligible for the POD program, as family child interaction learning programs do not qualify as a preschool. Therefore, the POD program would not benefit families for whom community-based preschools are not available or for families whom family child interaction learning programs are the preferred option.

Therefore, an appropriation for the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) to enter into contracts with third party providers for family child interaction learning programs as part of a mixed-delivery early learning system to ensure school readiness of Hawaii's children prior to entering kindergarten would benefit families in communities where community-based preschools are not available or for families for which family child interaction learning programs are the preferred option.

The Governor's Supplemental Executive Budget requests \$1 million for EOEL to contract with family child interaction learning programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

Written Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Education  
January 29, 2014, 1:30 p.m.  
by

Donald B. Young  
Personal Testimony

**SB 2975 RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING**

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee on Education;

My name is Donald Young. I am the Dean of the College of Education at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and co-chair your Teacher Education Coordinating Committee (TECC).

On behalf of the College of Education, I support SB 2975, which makes an appropriation for the executive office on early learning to enter into contracts with third party providers for family child interaction learning programs. My testimony here is similar to my stated support for SB 2826.

In 2013, the Teacher Education Coordinating Committee prepared a position statement relevant to SB 2975. The TECC members, representing the following education organizations, unanimously support this position statement.

Hawai‘i State Department of Education  
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa College of Education  
University of Hawai‘i West Oahu Division of Education  
University of Hawai‘i Hilo Department of Education  
University of Hawai‘i Hilo Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education  
University of Hawai‘i Honolulu Community College Early Childhood Education  
University of Hawai‘i Leeward Community College AAT Program  
Brigham Young University School of Education  
Chaminade University Education Division  
Hawai‘i Pacific University School of Education  
Hawai‘i Teacher Standards Board  
Teach for America  
University of Phoenix College of Education  
Hawai‘i P-20 Partnerships for Education

The position statement follows.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**TEACHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE (TECC)  
POSITION STATEMENT ON  
COMMITTING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

It is time for the State of Hawai‘i to commit funding for early childhood education. Hawai‘i is one of only 11 states without state-funded preschool. Yet the research is clear that laying a strong foundation for our youth through high quality preschool programs will result in productive and capable citizens. A recent study in Hawai‘i found that every \$1 invested in early education returns \$4.20 in future social program savings. We have spent years studying the issues. We know what the right thing to do is. Now is the time to do it.

The newly established Executive Office of Early Learning in the Governor’s Office is recommending a course for early learning that is revolutionary. The proposed Early Learning Program has a developmentally appropriate focus on the whole child, bringing education, social services, and health together to increase child success. Unlike older children or adults, young children need comprehensive, multi-dimensional services that exist on a continuum—from birth to at least 8 years of age—so that they can accomplish the tasks of development and learning important in the early years and are fully prepared for further learning in elementary, middle and high schools, postsecondary education and beyond.

The TECC supports the overarching principles of the proposed program. Affordable access to high quality early learning programs must be available to all children, regardless of socio-economic status, race or geographic location. Families must be engaged in the learning of their keiki and participate in the financing of the program; the plan must embrace public and private providers.

Research has shown that young children achieve better learning outcomes when they have teachers and caregivers with specialized preparation and on-going professional development in early childhood education. The TECC is committed to supporting the preparation, professional development, credentialing and licensing of early childhood professionals in a state-supported preschool system. We firmly believe that standards for professionals should remain high and that every child deserves a high-quality early learning setting. TECC members have programs in place and the capacity to address emerging State needs as the Legislature and institutions commit to universal early childhood education. Moreover, we support the Program’s plan to provide joint professional development and assistance to early childhood providers and educators in this public-private partnership.

We all need to pull together and support early education for all of Hawai‘i’s keiki. We ask that this year’s legislature support early childhood education by funding preschool for all four-year-olds beginning in 2014.

\*\*\*\*\*

About the TECC

The Teacher Education Coordinating Committee (TECC) is a statewide advisory committee created in HRS 304A-1202. Its membership consists of representatives of every institution of higher education that prepares teachers for the State’s schools, the Hawai‘i Department of Education, and the Hawai‘i Teacher Standards Board. In its monthly meeting, the TECC identifies, studies, acts, and makes recommendations on matters of education of common interest to the Hawai‘i State Department of Education.





Wednesday, January 29, 2014  
1:30 PM  
Conference Room 414

TESTIMONY TO  
THE SENATE COMMITTEE  
ON EDUCATION

**RE: SB 2975 – Relating to Early Learning**

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Witt, Executive Director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), which represents 99 private and independent schools in Hawaii and educates over 33,000 students statewide.

**HAIS is in support of SB 2975**, which would allow the office of early learning to enter into contracts with Family Child Interaction Learning (FCIL) programs. Hawaii is one of only ten states that does not have an established statewide early learning program, which means that we are missing a very crucial window of opportunity in the neural brain development of our young children.

Should the Constitutional Amendment pass during the 2014 election, SB 2975 will allow the Office of Early Learning to proceed with the development of a comprehensive early childhood system using public-private partnerships to build upon an already-existing high-quality early learning infrastructure. Due to limited resources and funds, it is imperative that the public and private sectors collaborate on this effort to ensure that all children have an equal opportunity for access to a quality early childhood education.

There is no one-size-fits-all mode of delivery for that education, thus it will be important to have the support of a variety of different modes for education that a mixed-delivery system would provide in order to reach the majority of the preschool-age population. FCIL programs provide an alternative for those who do not prefer formal schooling in group child care centers and public preschools or family child care homes. FCILs also engage the families in the education of their young children, an integral part of a successful and effective early education experience.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.



January 29, 2014

TO: Chair Jill Tokuda  
Vice-Chair Michelle Kidani  
Members of the Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Deborah Zysman  
Executive Director  
Good Beginnings Alliance

RE: **Support for SB2975**: RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING.

The Good Beginnings Alliance **supports SB2975**, which appropriates funding for the Executive Office on Early Learning to enter into contracts with third party providers for family child interaction learning (FCIL) programs. The Good Beginnings Alliance (GBA) is a policy and advocacy organization focused on ensuring that Hawaii's young children are healthy, safe, and ready for school. We have, and continue to be, in strong support of FCILs as an effective and proven early learning method.

FCILs emphasize the importance of family in the learning process for children ranging from birth through preschool. In 2006, GBA was fortunate to participate in a facilitated effort, lead by 'ELEU, the Native Hawaiian Early Learning Consortium, to review and outline the benefits of FCILs as a culturally and educationally relevant early learning system. This report helped describe the strength and purpose of FCILs by explaining and illustrating their curriculum, standards, assessment criteria, family interaction methods, environmental issues, and outcomes.

One need only look at the exceptional services that 'ELEU and others provide communities around our state to understand the important niche that FCILs fill. SB2975, if funded, would allow EOEL to work in tandem with our FCIL programs around the state to ensure that Hawaii's early learning system is inclusive and diverse enough to serve a variety of communities with varying needs.

GBA strongly supports SB2975 and thanks the Chairs and Committee for allowing us to testify.

Sincerely,  
Deborah Zysman  
Executive Director  
Good Beginnings Alliance

**INPEACE- Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture**

**TESTIMONY**

**SBs 2975, 2826, 2236, & 2768**

**RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, LEARNING and KINDERGARTEN**

Testimony Presented Before Committee on Education

January 29, 2014, in Conference Room 414 @ 1:30 pm

by Dr. Kanoe Nāone, Chief Executive Officer, INPEACE

INPEACE, the Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture, **supports SBs 2975, 2826, 2236, & 2768.**

We know that 85% of the brain is developed by the time children turn 5. As a former Department of Education elementary teacher and as a mother I have seen the benefits of early education and what happens when children don't have access to quality learning. The single largest impact on the well being of our K-12 system is access to early childhood education. By providing families, especially those in low-income areas, access to early learning we can dramatically and positively shift the well being of the children in those schools and areas. We believe an equitable early learning system is of critical importance to the success of our children and the economic future of our state. The elimination of Junior Kindergarten will affect more than 5,000 children in our communities, with the largest impact on those most at risk and who will not have access to preschool or early education before entering kindergarten.

As a Family Child Interaction Learning (FCIL) provider, INPEACE **strongly supports SB 2975** because we understand the value of this program in providing vital and culturally responsive services to some of the state's highest need populations. We are able to achieve success via FCILs by empowering families with the knowledge they need in order to support their children throughout school and life. Collectively, there are 6 organizations who are a part of 'Eleu (an early childhood consortium) and collectively we annually serve more than 25,000 children and their families statewide. Our FCILs are strategically placed in underserved areas where there are high concentrations of Native Hawaiians and minority populations. As a result, these families have access to FREE & high quality early childhood education, a critical need in at-risk areas. Support of FCILs through SB 2975 sends a clear message that the state is willing to diversify the early learning options based on family need and choice!

We **support SB 2826**, upon ratification, because it will move our state one step closer to building a viable early learning system. To establish this, we are committed to working with multiple organizations and agencies to offer a range of early learning programs that meet different needs and values to effectively serve the community more broadly and support the success of our most at-risk children. We support a system that provides families with culturally responsive, high-quality early learning opportunities that enables healthy, successful development, and the ability of each child to reach their full potential.

We **support SB 2236** to amend H.R.S. §302L to authorize agreements to use underutilized DOE and charter school facilities for preschool programs **with reservations**. We currently utilize classrooms in the DOE for 11 of our preschool sites already and have been doing so in some cases for the last 15 years, so we want to be sure that we are able to continue those partnerships if this bill passes. The lack of facilities and the high cost associated with them make it very difficult for preschool programs to thrive. This amendment has the ability to support preschools and systems alignment between the HIDOE and the early childhood system to ensure our children and their families have a smooth transition from their preschool programs into kindergarten.

We **support SB 2768** because this bill encourages collaboration & alignment between the early learning system and the HIDOE to establish a kindergarten readiness program.

INPEACE is a non-profit, educational organization that annually serves more than 4,500 children, parents and community members through its early childhood and workforce development programs on five different islands. The work of INPEACE over the past 20 years has been extensive and progressive in Hawai'i, particularly within communities that do not otherwise have access to the services it provides. On a daily basis, we see the critical role early learning plays in the economic wellbeing of communities, especially those in areas where poverty is prevalent. We also have statistically significant educational outcomes for the children in our FCIL programs making it a viable option for school readiness.



**HPCCA**

HAWAII PRIMARY CARE ASSOCIATION

**Senate Committee on Education**

The Hon. Jill N. Tokuda, Chair

The Hon. Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

**Testimony in Support of SB2975**

**Relating to Early Learning**

**Submitted by Robert Hirokawa, Chief Executive Officer**

**January 29, 2014, 1:30pm, Room 414**

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCCA), which represents the federally qualified community health centers in Hawaii, supports Senate Bill 2975, which sets aside vacant or unused classrooms as preschool classrooms.

The HPCCA is a staunch believer in the social determinants of health, those economic and social conditions that influence an individual and a community's health status. These conditions serve as risk factors endemic to a person's living and working environment, rather than their behavioral or genetic histories. Factors such as income, education, access to recreation and healthy foods, housing, and employment, can and do have measurable impacts on a person and a community, both in health and financial outcomes.

Chief amongst social determinants is education, and for that reason the HPCCA supports SB 2975. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



1806 So. King Street | Suite 30 | Honolulu, HI 96826 | (808)942-4708 | FAX (808)955-2739 | haeyc@hawaiiayc.org

Senate Committee on Education  
Wednesday, January 29, 2014  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 414

SB 2975 – appropriating funds for family child interaction learning programs

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the committee. Hawai'i Association for the Education of Young Children (HAEYC) supports the intent of SB 2975.

HAEYC requests that a definition of family child interaction learning (FCIL) programs be provided, as well as accountability for the funding and quality of programs that are funded.

FCIL programs are DHS license-exempt, as an adult is with the child for the time that they are at the program. Programs typically have adult/child(ren) come twice a week, for at least two hours. FCIL programs usually serve children from birth to kindergarten entry. The extent to which FCIL programs assess child development and share child development information with families varies. HAEYC supports quality across the FCIL programs.

HAEYC acknowledges the vision and courage it takes for legislators to enact laws that will come to full fruition after they leave office. Investing in early childhood development and education will be a lasting legacy.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

The Senate  
Twenty-Seventh Legislature 2014  
State of Hawai'i

TO: Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Education

DATE: Wednesday, January 29, 2014  
TIME: 1:30 p.m.  
PLACE: Conference Room 414  
Hawai'i State Capitol

FROM: Kamehameha Schools

**RE: SENATE BILL 2975, RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING**

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on SB 2975, relating to early learning. Kamehameha Schools offers comments in support of appropriating funds for the executive office on early learning to enter into contracts with third party providers for family child interaction learning programs as part of a mixed-delivery early learning system to ensure school readiness of Hawaii's children prior to entering kindergarten. We have been committed to advancing early learning across the state and have served in a leadership role with the state's Early Learning Advisory Board which unequivocally supports family child interaction learning programs.

Bernice Pauahi Bishop, whose mission is to improve the capability and well-being of Native Hawaiian children through education. We serve K-12 students through campus programs on O'ahu, Hawai'i and Maui, and three- and-four-year-olds at preschool sites statewide. In 2004, the Early Childhood Education division also began serving keiki from birth to three years old, as part of its Hi'ilani Early Childhood Collaborative program. We also provide scholarships to keiki attending other preschools and provide funding for child-family interaction programs that have filled a great need in rural communities.

Since its inception more than 20 years ago, the Kamehameha Schools Early Childhood Education Division has provided more than 11,000 keiki with their first preschool experience. Early childhood education and parental support is the cornerstone of the Education Strategic Plan adopted in 2005, which seeks to foster long-term intergenerational change in the way Native Hawaiian families approach learning. Research demonstrates that early education is a key factor in lifelong success for all children, and we strongly urge the legislature to promote, enhance and support the efforts of the State of Hawai'i to appropriately address the needs of Hawaii's pre-kindergarten children.

841 Bishop St., Suite 301  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



Telephone: 808 926-1530  
Contact@HEECoalition.org

Senate Committee on Education  
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

January 29, 2014

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members:

This testimony is submitted in support for SB2975, allowing the Executive Office of Early Learning to enter into contracts with third party providers offering child family interaction early learning programs, and the financial support for these programs.

The Hui for Excellence in Education (HE'E) is a diverse coalition of over 40 parent and community organizations dedicated to improving student achievement by increasing family and community engagement and partnerships in our schools. Our member list is attached.

The Coalition supports the State's plan of offering a variety of early learning and education options for our children. We like the child family interaction programs, specifically because they are focused on engaging parents and families with their children in these critical early years. Some families may not want to enroll their children in a traditional pre-school program. Child family interaction programs offer an alternative to help parents/caregivers build their capacity to support their children, and give them the tools to guiding their children when they enter the K-12 system.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration. Our support of this bill represents a 75% consensus or more of our membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura  
HE'E Coalition Director

HE'E Member List

Academy 21

After-School All-Stars Hawaii

Alliance for Place Based Learning

\*Castle Complex Community Council

Center for Civic Education

Coalition for Children with Special Needs

\*DOE Windward District

\*Faith Action for Community Equity

Fresh Leadership LLC

Girl Scouts Hawaii

\*Good Beginnings Alliance

Harold K.L. Castle Foundation

\*Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice

Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars

\*Hawai'i Charter School Network

\*Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition

\*Hawaii State PTSA

Hawai'i State Student Council

Hawai'i State Teachers Association

Hawai'i P-20

Hawai'i 3Rs

Head Start Collaboration Office

It's All About Kids

\*INPEACE

Joint Venture Education Forum

Junior Achievement of Hawaii

Kamehameha Schools

Kanu Hawai'i

Keiki to Career

Kupu A'e

\*Leaders for the Next Generation

Learning First

McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds

Our Public School

\*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning

\*Parents and Children Together

\*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i

Punahou School PUEO Program

Teach for America

The Learning Coalition

US PACOM

University of Hawai'i College of Education

YMCA of Honolulu

Voting Members (\*)





COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S COUNCIL OF HAWAII  
1177 Alakea Street • B-100 • Honolulu • HI • 96813  
TEL: (808) 586-5363 • TOLL FREE: 1-800-437-8641 • FAX: (808) 586-5366

January 28, 2014

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice-Chair  
Chairs of the Education Committee – State Capitol

RE: SB2975 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING.  
Executive Office on Early Learning; Parent Child Interaction Learning Programs; Appropriation  
(\$)

Dear Chair Tokuda and Vice-Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee,

The 17 Community Children's Councils (CCCs) **strongly supports** SB2975. This bill makes an appropriation for the executive office on early learning to enter into contracts with third party providers for family child interaction learning programs. We see the need for school readiness programs for our children.

The 17 Community Children's Councils (CCCs) are community-based bodies comprised of parents, professionals in both public and private agencies and other interested persons who are concerned with specialized services provided to Hawaii's students. Membership is diverse, voluntary and advisory in nature. The CCCs are in rural and urban communities organized around the Complexes in the Department of Education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testimony if there are any questions or you need further information please contact us at 586-5370

Sincerely yours

Tom Smith, Co-Chair

Jessica Wong-Sumida, Co-Chair

(Original signatures are on file with the CCCO)



Committee: Committee on Education  
Hearing Date/Time: Wednesday, January 29, 2014, 1:30 pm  
Place: Room 414  
Re: Testimony of the ACLU of Hawaii with Comments on SB 2975(Relating to Early Learning)

Dear Chair Tokuda and Members of the Committee on Education:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii (“ACLU of Hawaii”) offers comments on SB 2975, which appropriates funds for the executive office on early learning to enter into contracts with third party providers for family child interaction learning programs.

The ACLU of Hawaii notes that the current version of SB 2975 contains no provisions to ensure that: (1) the contemplated programs comply with the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution or the corresponding clause of the Hawaii Constitution, article I § 4 (“Establishment Clause”), which, *inter alia*, prohibits state funding of religious indoctrination; and (2) the programs adequately safeguard against unlawful discrimination.

At a minimum, SB 2975 should include language to require that all eligible providers comply with applicable state and federal laws. Additionally, the bill should include language to direct that private providers are prohibited from engaging in discrimination, sectarian instruction, indoctrination, and other religious activities. Finally, the bill should be amended to identify necessary protections for a number of potentially applicable federal and state non-discrimination provisions, including but not limited to: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, or national origin; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, prohibiting discrimination based on sex; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and H.R.S. § 378-2 (regarding gender identity and sexual orientation).

The ACLU of Hawaii fully supports high-quality early education and agrees that it is essential to childhood development and future performance; however, these publicly funded private programs must be developed in a way that protects against unintended (and unlawful) discrimination.

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii  
P.O. Box 3410  
Honolulu, Hawaii'i 96801  
T: 808-522-5900  
F: 808-522-5909  
E: [office@acluhawaii.org](mailto:office@acluhawaii.org)  
[www.acluhawaii.org](http://www.acluhawaii.org)

Chair Tokuda and Members of the Committee on  
Education  
January 29, 2014  
Page 2 of 2

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Daniel Gluck  
Senior Staff Attorney  
ACLU of Hawaii

*The mission of the ACLU of Hawaii is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawaii fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawaii is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawaii has been serving Hawaii for over 45 years.*

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i  
P.O. Box 3410  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96801  
T: 808-522-5900  
F: 808-522-5909  
E: [office@acluhawaii.org](mailto:office@acluhawaii.org)  
[www.acluhawaii.org](http://www.acluhawaii.org)

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Education  
Wednesday, January 29, 2014 at 1:30 P.M.  
Conference Room 414, State Capitol**

**RE: SENATE BILL 2975 RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING**

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** SB 2975 – Relating to Early Learning.

The Chamber is the largest business organization in Hawaii, representing over 1,000 businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the “Voice of Business” in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state’s economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

The Chamber believes that this measure must be in place to provide services to children before they enter kindergarten. Providing family child interaction learning programs as part of a mixed delivery early learning system is critical in ensuring school readiness of Hawaii’s children prior to entering kindergarten.

Also, the Chamber strongly believes that focusing on early childhood is critical because brain development takes place by age five. We believe it’s imperative to begin investing early in a child’s life, when the brain is in this state of tremendous growth potential. In 2008, the Hawaii Economic Benefits Study of early education for Hawai‘i showed that for every \$1 Hawai‘i invests in a quality four-year early learning program, the state will receive a return of \$4.20. This is not only about return of investment but in providing for our employees and their children.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

From: [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
To: [EDU Testimony](#)  
Cc: [tabalos@hsta.org](mailto:tabalos@hsta.org)  
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2975 on Jan 29, 2014 13:30PM  
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2014 9:06:00 AM

---

**SB2975**

Submitted on: 1/29/2014

Testimony for EDU on Jan 29, 2014 13:30PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tanya Abalos-Arceneaux	Individual	Comments Only	Yes

Comments: TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
DATE: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014 RE: S.B. 2975 – RELATING TO EARLY LEARNING PERSON TESTIFYING: WIL OKABE HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION The Honorable Chair Jill Tokuda, The Honorable Vice-Chair Michelle Kidani and the Members of the Committee: The Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) would like to provide comments to SB 2975 relating to third party providers for family child interaction learning programs. HSTA is the exclusive representative of more than 13,500 public and charter schoolteachers statewide. As the state affiliate, of the 3.2 million members of the National Education Association, HSTA believes in the importance of quality programs to assist family child interaction. It is unclear what type of services will be provided to students prior to entering Kindergarten, however we are opposed to: • Any privatization or subcontracting programs that have the potential to reduce the resources that otherwise would be available to achieve and/or maintain a system of quality public education, or the potential to otherwise negatively impact on public education; • Allows public funds to be used for religious education or other religious purposes or otherwise weakens the separation of church and state; • Places the economic security of public education employees at risk, without regard to individual job performance so that the services in question can be performed by private sector employees; or has the purpose or effect of causing or maintaining racial segregation in the public schools. We urge you to invest in our public school as they are underfunded and value our existing schools by keeping tax dollars to serve all children in public schools. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on SB 2975.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email [webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov)

TESTIMONY

**SB 2975**

**RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. LEARNING**

Testimony Presented Before

Committee on Education

January 29, 2014, in Conference Room 414 @ 1:30 pm

by Lisa Pakele

Members of the Education Committee:

I am submitting my testimony in **strong support** of SB 2975.

As a former parent of the FCIL program Keiki Steps- I am able to share personally the impact the program has made on my family and I. The program provided an option for my husband and I to ensure our son had quality early childhood experiences before he entered kindergarten. My son and I participated in Keiki Steps for almost 2 years - from the time he was 3-5 years of age. During this time the program impacted me as a mother because I was able to learn and understand the development of my child, which then in turn helped me to provide activities at home to build on what he was learning from the program.

Keiki Steps provided a multitude of quality early learning experiences through a variety of centers - like reading, sensory, science, thinking, etc. that helped him build academic skills. In addition he learned many social skills- like sharing, communication and also roles and routines, which are important skills necessary in life! I believe that Keiki Steps has empowered me as a parent to support my son and also helped my son to be more prepared to enter school ready to succeed with academic and social skills!

I am living testament to parent empowerment. In fact, I went on to become the Keiki Steps Program Director. In that role today, I am a voice for the 7,000 keiki and more than 5,000 families our program has served since 1999. I am able to see first hand, the children who participate in Keiki Steps who have made statistically significant gains, scoring a mean of 47.0 percentile in the pre-test and 61.0 percentile in the post-test.

The socio-economic profiles of INPEACE's Keiki Steps families illustrate the need for systematic change in economic and social policies to help these families break the cycle poverty. Over 60% of these families reported living within 187% of the federal poverty guidelines. Another 33% reported living within 283% of the federal poverty guidelines.

FCIL are programs that are making a dramatic difference in the social, emotional and cognitive development of pre-kindergarten children who not only met, but also exceeded 90 percent of school readiness benchmarks as measured by the Hawai'i School Readiness Assessment in 2011 and 2012.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

January 26, 2014  
Hearing on Wednesday, January 29, 2014 at 1:30 p.m.  
Senate Education Ways and Means Committee  
Conference Room 414  
In support of SB 2975

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Phyllis Ida and I am a retired DOE Special Educator, and the former 619 Coordinator for the Windward District. I also over see the grant administration for the Windward District P-3 Demonstration Project that focuses on keiki reading on grade level by third grade, providing model program of seamless early learning experiences from early childhood programs through elementary school for young children in the Windward District.

I am writing this testimony to ask for your support of SB 2975 as it makes an appropriation for the for the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) to enter into contracts with third party providers for family child interaction learning programs.

The Windward P- 3 Grant & its Demonstration Project appreciates and acknowledges the need for this particular measure in order for the Executive Office on Early Learning to proceed with its educational plan for Hawaii's young children.

The Windward P-3 Demonstration recognizes that families need an early learning system that offers a plethora of options when it comes to providing their child with quality early learning experiences.

Family child interactive learning (FCIL) provides families who access family, friend and neighbor care for their keiki with support services that provide young children with quality early learning opportunities. These programs are known by many different names (i.e., parent-child interaction programs, play and learn groups, family literacy programs, traveling preschools, family education, and parent participation preschools).

The Hawaii State School Readiness Assessment (HSSRA) for the 2012 -2013 School Year estimates that approximately 43% of Hawaii's keiki entered kindergarten without preschool experience. FCIL programs help close the kindergarten readiness gap by providing families with knowledge and skills on how to provide their keiki with familial interaction that have a positive impact on their educational success.

FCIL programs are a very important & integral piece of our early learning system. Without it, we are not providing families with the plethora of education & care options that they want or need.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 2975.



Testimony in support of:

SB 2236 - Public Preschools in DOE and Charter Schools,

SB2826 - Establishing an Early Childhood Education Program and

SB2975 – Appropriations for the EOEL to contract third party providers of FCIL

Senate Committee on Education

January 29, 2014

1:30 pm, Conf Rm 414

Chair, Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair, Michelle N. Kidani and members of the Education Committee

I am in support of SB2236, SB 2826 and SB2975, as they increase the state's capacity to provide quality early learning services to Hawaii's young children.

I am a retired DOE administrator and special education teacher and understand the importance of early education services for young children. I do support a state funded Early Childhood Education program, *but only in addition to serving the existing 5100 late borns, not at the expense of eliminating Kindergarten services to these children.*

The research simply does not back up the assumptions made in 2004, that late born children make for "un-equitable" comparisons between Hawaii's students and other states on achievement tests in their later years. Studies show that developmental K programs such as Jr.K, or retaining K students for two years, or redshirting / delaying K entry, were not beneficial.

Though I support enlisting the private sector to increase the state's provider capacity, I am concerned that they be held to the same state and federal civil rights laws, that are currently applicable to public schools. I would not support private sector programs that could not accommodate disabled children, children of different religious faiths and gender identities, or who overtly or covertly promote a particular religious orientation.

Maintaining the public kindergarten entry age at December 31, will ensure that all children receive fair and appropriate programming, that safeguards their civil rights.

With that said, I do recognize the critical need for pre-kindergarten aged children to have access to high quality early learning experiences. The state clearly does not yet have the capacity to serve *all* of these children, and it is therefore imperative that we harness all public and private resources to provide high quality preschool services.

I would recommend that until the public and private early learning system has the capacity to serve *all* pre-kindergarten aged children, with out discrimination or displacing the younger three or two year old cohorts, that the state maintain the current K entry age of December 31 and gradually move up the entry age, as it simultaneously builds the capacity of a fair and equitably mixed, public and private early learning system.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on these bills.

John Flynn,  
Retired, DOE Principal, District Special Education Educational Officer

Testimony in support of:

SB2236 - Public Preschools in DOE and Charter Schools,

SB2826 - Establishing an Early Childhood Education Program and

SB2975 – Appropriations for the EOEL to contract third party providers of FCIL

Senate Committee on Education

January 29, 2014

1:30 pm, Conf Rm 414

Chair, Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair, Michelle N. Kidani and members of the Education Committee

I am in support of SB2236, SB 2826 and SB2975, as they increase the state's capacity to provide quality early learning services to Hawaii's young children.

I am the Project Director of an early childhood education project in Wai`anae serving many high-risk children and families, many of whom will have no feasible alternative, once the children are no longer eligible for Kindergarten.

Let me therefore state that I am *not* in agreement with the legislature's 2004 decision (ACT 219) to raise the age of entry into Kindergarten, which has been the stimulus behind consequent efforts to provide both Jr.K and now Pre-K to serve the so called "late born" children.

I do support a state funded Early Childhood Education program, *but only in addition to serving the existing 5100 late borns, not at the expense of eliminating Kindergarten services to these children.* The research simply does not back up the assumptions made in 2004, that late born children make for "un-equitable" comparisons between Hawaii's students and other states on achievement tests in their later years. Studies show that developmental K programs such as Jr.K, or retaining K students for two years, or redshirting / delaying K entry, were not beneficial.

With that said, I do recognize the critical need for these children to have access to high quality early learning experiences. The state clearly does not yet have the capacity to serve *all* of these children, and it is therefore imperative that we harness all public and private resources including charter schools, to provide high quality preschool services. It is also imperative that the EOEL assure that any contracted private provider safeguard both State and Federal laws that assure equal access to programs and protect against any violations of federal and state civil rights laws.

I would recommend that until the public and private early learning system has the capacity to serve *all* 4 year old children, without displacing the younger three or two year old cohorts currently served in the private system, that the state maintain the current K entry age of

December 31 and gradually move up the entry age, as it simultaneously builds the capacity of public and private mixed delivery early learning system.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on these bills.

Gale Flynn,  
Ho`okahua Early Childhood Education Project Director

January 26, 2014  
Hearing on Wednesday, January 29, 2014 at 1:30 p.m.  
Senate Education Ways and Means Committee  
Conference Room 414  
In support of SB 2975

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Celia Chang Takahashi and I am an Early Childhood Professional and the mother of two young children.

I am writing this testimony to ask for your support of SB 2975 as it makes an appropriation for the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) to enter into contracts with third party providers for family child interaction learning programs.

As an early childhood professional and parent I understand & am in support of the measures outlined in this bill. They are needed in order for the Executive Office on Early Learning to proceed with its educational plan for Hawaii's young children.

In Hawaii it is not uncommon for working families to entrust the care of their young children to a caring family member, friend or neighbor because of socio-economic conditions, as well as the value of family.

FCIL programs provide families with an opportunity to obtain knowledge and skills that help them provide the keiki in their care with quality early learning opportunities within their home and the community.

The Hawaii State School Readiness Assessment (HSSRA) for the 2012 -2013 School Year estimates that approximately 43% of Hawaii's keiki entered kindergarten without preschool experience. (Note: The statistics for SY 2013 -2014 were not available at the time when this testimony was written.)

Supporting a variety of quality early learning experiences, including FCIL programs, is crucial because approximately 5,000 keiki will be affected by the kindergarten age change that will happen in Hawaii's public schools starting with the 2014 - 2015 school year.

If more than 40% of Hawaii's keiki were entering kindergarten without preschool experience during SY 2012 - 2013, the numbers in the near future could go up as families are impacted by the kindergarten age change and are still unable to find or afford preschool tuition or qualify for Head Start.

As an educator & mother of two young children I am in support of SB2975 as it provides families with another option when considering developmentally appropriate, high quality early learning opportunities for their keiki.

It is time for us to seriously invest in the future of Hawaii making a solid investment our keiki.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 2975.

**From:** [Alfred Castle](#)  
**To:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Early Childhood Education  
**Date:** Monday, January 27, 2014 6:27:22 AM

---

I fully support SG 2975, SB 2236, SB2826, and 2768.

Alfred L. Castle  
Executive Director and Treasurer  
Samuel N. and Mary Castle Foundation  
733 Bishop Street, Suite 1275  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone (808) 522-1101  
Fax (808) 522-1103

Testimony to  
The Senate Education Committee

Wednesday, January 29, 2014  
Conference Room 414  
Hawaii State Capitol

Re: Senate Bill 2975, Relating to Early Learning

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice-chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 2975, relating to early learning. My name is Robert G. Peters and I am a retired school head of an independent school in Honolulu which has a pre-K program. I am testifying in support of appropriating funds for the executive office on early learning to enter into contracts with third party providers for family child interaction learning programs as part of a mixed-delivery system to ensure school readiness of Hawaii's children prior to kindergarten.

Research demonstrates the critical importance of early education in the life-long success for all children and recognizes that parents are a child's first teachers. As an educator and through my involvement with early learning since the creation of the early learning educational task force in 2006, I have increasingly appreciated programs that integrate parents in the educational process of their children. Not only is family engagement important in setting a child on the right course for school, but programs like the family child interaction learning programs support the education of parents about how they can best teach their own children.

Choice is something we celebrate in Hawaii. The inclusion of family child interaction learning programs as part of the early learning system for our State ensures that choice is offered and that the system is responsive to our citizenry.

I urge the legislature to consider this bill favorably as it approaches addressing the needs of Hawaii's *keiki*.

Sincerely,  
Robert G. Peters, EdD



February 28, 2014

To: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Education

From: Robyn S. B. Chun  
rsbchun@gmail.com

Education Committee Hearing  
February 28, 2014

Honorable Chairs & Committee Members:

Thank you for your policy leadership when it comes to addressing the needs of Hawai'i's youngest keiki as well as your tireless work in the community supporting many of the early childhood organizations and practitioners across a diverse spectrum that are care passionately about young children (birth through 8 years) and their families.

I am testifying in support of S.B. 2826, S.B. 2236, S.B. 2975 and S.B. 2768 which enable Hawai'i to establish an Early Childhood Education Program that is part of the larger Early Learning System established in section 302L-2 Hawai'i Revised Statutes. The proposed amendments to the Act and supporting bills build on previous legislation and incorporates the contributions from multiple stakeholders. It allows the state to begin work on a mixed-delivery system for children birth through 8-years-old that builds on the strengths and collective public and private sector resources in our communities on behalf of our most needy young children and their families.

My work as a teacher in preschools and DOE K-1 classrooms, as family child care provider and teacher educator, and my personal experience as a mother of twins, has impressed upon me the importance of providing each child with a meaningful and culturally relevant early experience that will address each child's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development.

The Executive Office on Early Learning has demonstrated it is a partner that works hand-in-hand with families, advocacy agencies and diverse organizations within our early childhood professional Ohana. Their work builds upon years of effort on behalf of many groups and will assure that we move forward building on the wisdom and expertise of representatives of our island community and field as we design and implement an early learning system where:

- each young child is assured of a strong foundation to succeed educationally and in life,

- families and communities are supported and empowered as partners in assuring their keiki succeed as lifelong learners and contributing members of our communities and society; and,
- there are culturally and geographically responsive program options to address the needs and concerns of our most vulnerable keiki and families.

I support incorporating of quality standards that focus on as positive teacher-child interactions and commitments to family engagement as essential components of a sound early childhood program. I also support the value of assessments that will take into account all developmental domains and which facilitate continuity of each child's experience across birth – 8 settings, with the caveat that we must provide practitioners and programs with the professional development resources and support needed to be able to assess children and evaluate programs using ethically responsible methods that respect and honor each child's individual and cultural uniqueness. We shall also need to nurture in our practitioners the ability to use formative assessment to inform meaningful, integrated, content rich and child centered curriculum that supports all areas of development and provides a strong foundation for later educational experiences. In my experience, practitioners across the PK-K spectrum are actively seeking guidance on how to address development and content standards appropriately.

The field of early childhood education has existed for many years without a steady funding base and as a result is characterized by difficulty retaining and growing a highly skilled workforce. As a teacher educator, I am mindful of the investment needed to provide for an adequate infrastructure that results in high quality programs. In order to ensure children can benefit from the kind of services that can lead to lifelong positive outcomes, I hope that adequate funding will be designated to support early educators in their professional development needs, to create career and educational pathways for the field, and to attract and retain a highly trained workforce. I am also hopeful that this support will create opportunities for professional development that crosses over the boundaries of institutions and that fosters opportunities for collaboration and community across settings. It seems it would be necessary for practitioners across the spectrum of settings to have shared experiences and understanding we are to build an early learning system together.

Preparing our children for the future means, in part, investing in their well-being from the start. These bills collectively are a positive step forward in helping Hawaii's families provide for their keiki during the early childhood years (birth through age 8 years). It creates an opportunity for shared leadership that listens to and reflects the needs, wisdom, and expertise of our community. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of S.B. 2826, S.B. 2236, S.B. 2975, and S.B. 2768.

Sincerely yours,  
Robyn S. B. Chun  
Early Childhood Teacher Educator

Jan. 28, 2014

To: Senator Jill Tokuda, Senate Education Chair; Senator Michelle Kidani, Senate Education Vice Chair; and committee members

**I am in strong support of proposed legislation (SB 2826, SB 2236, SB 2975 and SB 2768) RELATED TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND KINDERGARTEN.**

High-quality early education or developmentally (culturally and linguistically) appropriate programs, prior to entering kindergarten, positively affect the physical, cognitive, linguistic, social, and emotional outcomes of young children. Provided with such opportunities, children are more likely to succeed in kindergarten and beyond, and more likely to grow into healthy, capable, and contributing adults. Studies have proven that high-quality programs are especially effective for at-risk children, including low-income and otherwise disadvantaged children, with the great potential to alter their lifetime trajectories.

In Hawaii only 40% of our 4 year olds receive early childhood education services to prepare them for kindergarten and not all are high quality. Children with a lack of readiness for school creates an achievement gap that often follows children to later grades in school. In addition, 1 in 6 children in Hawaii live in poverty, and most do not have equal access to high quality early childhood education. This not only affects individual children, families, communities but also affects the rest of society.

Societies that invest in quality early learning boast higher levels of educational attainment; reduced homelessness, crime, and substance abuse; improved health; and better overall social and economic well-being. In Hawaii every \$1 invested in early learning generates \$4.20 in future savings and increased earnings. Many in Hawaii's education field, including DOE educators, agree that if we're going to put our money anywhere in education, it should be in early learning.

Recognizing the significant benefits of high-quality early learning programs, federal, state, as well as local governments have substantially increased their investments in preschool programs in the past decade. Unfortunately, Hawaii is one of the last 10 states without a State-funded early learning program and if this bill is passed, we will finally join the rest of the states with our own State-funded early learning program.

I am in strong support of **SB 2826 RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**, which will enable Hawaii to implement a statewide early childhood education program, upon ratification of amendment to article X, section 1 of the Hawaii State Constitution. This early childhood education program with providers of high quality early learning education will be established within the Early Learning System, established by section 302L-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

SB 2826, outlines Hawaii's over 25 year that our state has been slowly building support for an early learning system. With increased attention nationwide on the positive results from high quality prekindergarten programs, more opportunities for federal funding and increased rigor

in early learning and K-12 educational standards, Hawaii cannot afford to take any more time. We need to act as soon as the constitutional amendment is ratified. Once ratified, public dollars could go to qualified private early childhood providers as well as the DOE to build a mixed service delivery system of high quality early childhood education.

With the passage of SB 2826, the State will:

- Build capacity for 4 year olds.
- Build on the existing and private investments.
- Establish developmentally appropriate quality standards linked to children's educational outcomes.
- Utilize a mixed service delivery system (e.g. center-based, group child care homes, family child care programs, family child interaction learning programs, faith-based, DOE) and contract with eligible providers.
- Contract with eligible providers who meet structural quality (physical environment, child-adult ratios, group size, caregiver qualifications, compensation), have a quality curriculum and provide intentional teaching. In addition, there will be particular focus on positive teacher-child interactions, individual child formative assessment, and family engagement.
- Recognize that eligible providers administer early education programs conducted in Hawaiian and English languages.
- Have eligible programs that address multiple domains of children's learning and development (physical, social, emotional, linguistic, cognitive, approaches to learning).
- Offer voluntary early learning programs to 3 and 4 year olds, with priority to children in year before kindergarten, and underserved or at-risk children.
- Enable EOEL to provide support to eligible providers about how to implement quality standards (positive teacher-child interactions, individual child formative assessment, family engagement, and curriculum aligned with Hawaii Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS) and Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

In addition, I am in strong support of **SB 2236 RELATED TO EARLY LEARNING**, which authorizes EOEL to enter into agreements with the DOE and charter schools for use of vacant or underutilized classrooms as public preschool classrooms. These classrooms will give priority to DOE and charter schools serving at-risk children and these classroom are in addition to current pre-plus programs. It is sound fiscal policy to use existing classrooms before constructing new ones.

Another bill that I am in strong support of is **SB 2975 RELATING TO EARLY LEARNIG**, which will make an appropriation for the EOEL to enter into contracts with third party providers for family child interaction learning programs (FCILs). High quality FCILs are a vital and important part of the mixed delivery early learning system in Hawaii, often serving Native Hawaiian rural and urban communities for many years.

Finally, I am in strong support of **SB 2768 RELATING TO KINDERGARTEN**, which will make DOE kindergarten mandatory for a child who will be at least five years of age on July 31 of the school year. This legislation will also require the DOE, in collaboration with the EOEL, to develop a statewide kindergarten readiness program and establish an individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system.

Studies have shown that high quality full day kindergarten is very beneficial for young children's short term and long term success in school and life. Yet, this critical grade is often overlooked in the K-12 system. And with attention to a voluntary prekindergarten program it makes sense to make DOE kindergarten mandatory. Full day DOE kindergarten mandatory will confirm Hawaii's commitment to our future kindergarteners and their families. High quality kindergarten, should not be a push down of first grade curriculum but it needs to be an enriching developmentally (culturally and linguistic) appropriate kindergarten where each and every child can reach challenging yet achievable goals.

In addition, I support the passage of SB 2768 to develop a statewide kindergarten readiness program, with an individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system. I believe this kindergarten readiness program, along with the state prekindergarten program needs to be part of the birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade (or P-3) continuum. The individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system should be an entry assessment that is developmentally appropriate and assess multiple domains of learning (e.g. physical, social-emotional, cognitive, linguistic, approaches to learning) and a formative assessment that is used by teachers to link with curriculum and improve instruction and educational outcomes.

With SB 2768, I support the appropriation to the DOE for \$450,000 for 2014-15. This funding will help DOE with administration, technology, and support for establishing the individualized kindergarten readiness assessment system and provide for 4 full time equivalent (FTE) positions for professional development and training of kindergarten teachers.

Thank you for your compassion, commitment and leadership establishing high quality early education and kindergarten for Hawaii' keiki, their families and our entire society.

Sincerely,

Terry Lock  
Junior Specialist  
University of Hawaii at Manoa, College of Education  
Institute for Teacher Education  
Everly Hall, Room 224  
locktf@hawaii.edu

Testimony in support of:

SB 2236 - Public Preschools in DOE and Charter Schools,

SB2826 - Establishing an Early Childhood Education Program and

SB2975 – Appropriations for the EOEL to contract third party providers of FCIL

Senate Committee on Education

January 29, 2014

1:30 pm, Conf Rm 414

Chair, Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair, Michelle N. Kidani and members of the Education Committee

I am in support of SB2236, SB 2826 and SB2975, as they increase the state’s capacity to provide quality early learning services to Hawaii’s young children.

I am a parent of four children, and former teacher with a preschool and Family Child Interaction Program. I understand the importance of early education services for young children do support a state funded Early Childhood Education program.

I do not believe that raising the Kindergarten age is needed to begin a new publically funded preschool. There has been too much emphasis on raising test scores, and delaying the age of kindergarten entry is a misguided effort that assumes that if our children are the same age as those in other states, test score comparisons will be more equitable. Frankly, I do not think that sacrificing the education of 5100 so called late born children, is worth making more “equitable” test score comparisons.

Maintaining the public kindergarten entry age at December 31, and making available state funded pre-kindergarten to three and four year old children, will ensure that all of Hawaii’s young children have the right foundation for their learning and development that they deserve.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on these bills.

Tara Awai,

Mother and former Early Childhood Education Teacher

January 28, 2014

Dear Chair Tokuda and Vice-Chair Kidani,

I am writing to express my support of the following bills:

SB2826

SB2236

SB2975

SB2768

I believe these bills will promote the welfare of the children and families of Hawaii. I am concerned that our youngest, most impressionable members of our society receive every measure we can provide to equip them for a bright and successful future. Thank you for your tireless support of our people and for working for the best interests of Hawaii. Please vote in support of these important measures.

Mahalo,

Terry Nakamura

**SB2975**

Submitted on: 1/27/2014

Testimony for EDU on Jan 29, 2014 13:30PM in Conference Room 414

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
debby	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: Continue to support Waianae children and families who are in desperate need

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
danny goya	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: The FCIL environment is not only culturally appropriate, but developmentally appropriate as well. According to research, the optimum way for a young learner between the ages of 0-5 to learn is through its most intimate relationships and contact. In other words, the closer the relationship (mother/father, grandparent) to the child the better the results in social and cognitive development. FCIL groups are high-quality community based learning environments that empower and equip caregivers to be their child's first and foremost influential educator. The FCIL's are built for high capacity, have a low cost-per-participant and produce high outcomes. I stand in support for legislative recognition and financial support for FCILs.